2:Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

283 Until a few years ago, ropemaking was done only in response to specific orders
434 from individual buyers, and each producer took great pride in his product. In
[477] the last few years, however, some producers have been competing with one another, and profits have been reduced. (See Table 44.)

TABLE 44. Estimated Cost of Production of Rope, 20 Varas Long.

April, 1944	*Pesos*
Cost of 3 lbs. of *ixtle* fiber	3.75
Preparation of fiber	1.00
Cost of twisting	.70
Cost of spinning	1.50
Labor cost in rope twisting	.50
[435] Total production cost	7.45
Sale price of rope	8.00
Profit	.55

Since all the labor is done by members of the family, there would be a daily income of 3.70 pesos plus .55 for profit above cost.

438 *CIRCULATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF GOODS*

439 The circulation of goods in Tepoztlán is carried on by means of the local market,
443 stores, itinerant merchants, inter-village trade, the sale and purchase of goods in

283

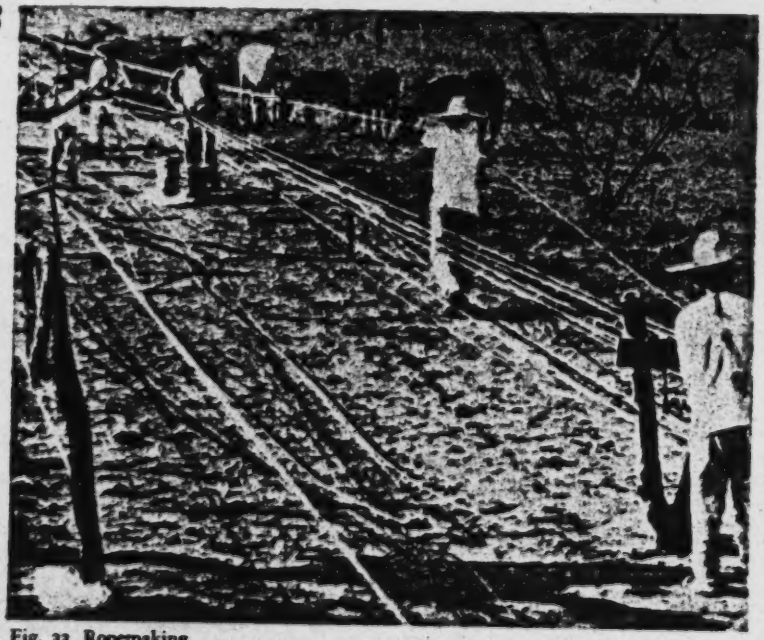

Fig. 33. Ropemaking.

2;Lewis E-5 (1943-1948)1951 NU37 Tepoztlan NU37

familiarity, joking, ridicule, insult, or attack. Although the *Vd.-Vd* relationship also implies equality of status, it is by no means the same psychologically, since both parties extend reciprocal respect.

In the light of the individualism of Tepoztecans, a great deal of competition in inter-personal relations might be supposed. But this is not the case. Tepoztlán is not a competitive society.[7] Accordingly, a lack of strong drive and ambition for self-improvement and a lack of initiative and originality are notable. Most adults tend to be self-satisfied if they have enough food and clothing from harvest to harvest. Among the young people, too, there is a general acceptance of the way of life: young men wish to be farmers as their fathers are, and most young girls continue to work at home and serve their elders. The rewards they seek are not impossible of achievement: occasional new clothes, shoes, a sweetheart, freedom to attend fiestas, and ultimately to marry, with some parental help.

Most married adults find sufficient reward in their growing children, who by their obedience and labor little by little lighten the burden of the parents and give some promise of protection for their parents' old age. (See Fig. 51.) There is almost no pressure upon the parents by the children in the form of demands for material comforts or for independence. Even parents who do not provide minimum necessities for health and comfort, or who are lazy or who drink, do not lose their authoritative position or their right to respect. Few Tepoztecan parents feel inadequate or a failure for not providing well or advancing economically. Insubordination on the part of the children would have a far more shaking effect than chronic poverty upon parental esteem.

There is a relative absence of concern for the future. Only the minority, who recognize education as an important source of security, save in advance for the education of a son or daughter. It is among these families that self-denial in the present, in order to gain future reward, is encountered—a familiar pattern among the urban middle class. The rest of the population exercise general thrift, but it can best be characterized as spending when there is money and pulling in their belts when there is none. The absence of saving "for a rainy day" or for a "nest egg" is striking.

Young people planning marriage do not save in anticipation of their many needs; they marry at short notice, as soon as there is money to pay for the wedding, the money being supplied by the boy's parents from the sale of an animal, by borrowing, or sometimes by the boy's going to work for a few months until the money is raised. Again, when a child is expected, there is no saving in anticipation of its

[7] Though competition occurs in Tepoztlán it is generally between groups rather than between individuals and, for the most part, is limited to social rather than economic activities in which prestige rather than material gain is at stake.

It is interesting to note that in recent years the introduction of certain forms of competition has had disastrous effects. The violence, murder, and bitterness which have grown out of the new competitive enterprise, such as the two bus lines, and the inter-village competition in the communal forest resources for the commercial production of charcoal, suggest that Tepoztecans were quite unprepared for such innovations.